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Reflection Paper

**Introduction**

 The United States of America became a great super-power when the world became bipolar after two Great Wars, and it emerged as a sole superpower after the Cold War. Since then, its policies especially foreign policy affects almost the whole world. The global community stands with its stance whether willingly or unwillingly even if it decides to wage a war on a whole country, Afghanistan and Iraq are notable examples. The US foreign policies were more humanitarian before the world became unipolar than after it. Being a super-power, the US has more responsibilities to protect the rights of the oppressed ones and to promote a culture of tolerance and acceptance within and beyond its physical periphery. Scholars have pointed out many flaws in the US foreign policy since Cold War that they believe should be fixed if the country aspires to retain its prestige as a country where civil rights have a universal definition and they are given respect without any kind of prejudice against any community on the face of the earth. Julie Mertus and Tazreena Sajjad have written an article that argues that human rights were already at stake and the US war on terror has caused much damage to that (Mertus, Julie, and Tazreena Sajjad. p.p 2-24). Mahmood Mamdani’s article is about the concept of good-Muslim and bad-Muslim. He argues that this is a wrong approach that we see terrorism from a cultural lens although we should see it through a political lens, and we should make policies to weaken the terrorists instead of declaring a war against a phenomenon that we call Radical Islam. Francis J. Gavin’s article *Same as It Ever Was* sheds light on the actual issue of the new world that Gavin believes is on the horizon for more than half a century and the US foreign policy is still unable to make an effective strategy to address this issue: nuclear proliferation. P.W. Singer in his article *Outsourcing War* stresses upon the US foreign policymakers to consider the private organizations which are involved in promoting warfare and destruction in an organized way for the sake of money (Singer, Peter W. P.p. 119). Mary L. Dudziak discusses a famous case of a colored American Oliver Brown who won it against the Board of Education of Topeka during the 1950s. Dudziak argues that apparently, the case was a domestic case of America, but it had global significance. She concludes by claiming that we should internationalize American history. Chapter 8 of Kaufman’s book discusses the possible future of foreign policy of the USA. He argues that the US foreign policy has become too uncertain in this contemporary era that any major incident like 9/11 or Brexit can mold it in any direction.

**Body**

 Above mentioned five articles are in such a relationship that two of them discuss the US foreign policy in the context of Cold War whereas the two other discuss it in the context of 9/11, the fifth article is an overall commentary on the issue of private terrorist organizations that are plaguing the US values since WW-II ended. One factor is common in all the mentioned pieces of literature that they discuss the US foreign policy. Francis J. Gavin’s article *Same as It Ever Was* and Mary L. Dudziak’s article *Brown as a Cold War Case* discusses the US foreign policy in the context of the Cold War. Dudziak chooses Oliver Brown's case to study the US attitude during the Cold War. The segregated school was a known practice in many states of the USA during the 1950s when a colored student Oliver Brown who sued against the Board of Education of Topeka in 1954. The case was tried in the Supreme Court and the court gave a clear declaration that any school in America that believes in or promotes segregation is ‘Un-American’ and thus illegal. Dudziak argues that it was a blow to Communism because it gave an impression throughout the world that Capitalism and democracy do not discriminate based on color. It softened the US image during the Cold War that helped the US to promote its ideology at home and beyond its borders. She says that the US policy has not merely domestic implications rather international ones; therefore we should design our policies that are of acceptance on a global level. She concludes that this very feature seems absent from our current foreign policy. Francis J. Gavin agrees with this argument of Dudziak, but he notes that the US foreign policy has become a sham since those very days which became the cause of our rise as a sole Super-Power: the days of Cold War (Gavin, Francis. P.p. 7-37). He argues that we glamorize the Cold War era as the era of heroism, but we forget that this very era played a key role in nuclear proliferation that was declared as a potential threat to the existence of humankind quick after WW-II. Gavin calls it criminal negligence that we showed while India and Pakistan were acquiring nuclear weapons that led this lethal weapon of mass destruction to North Korea that has become a potential threat to global peace. He concludes that the US foreign policy-makers still ignore this issue that seems too irresponsible attitude from such a great country like America.

Mahmood Mamdani’s article *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism* and the article *Human Rights and Human Insecurity: The Contributions of US Counterterrorism* written by Julie Mertus and Tazreena Sajjad point out flaws in the US foreign policy after 9/11. Mamdani argues that the US has made a major mistake in equalizing terrorism with Islam and introducing the term Radical Islam. This term has led to the concepts of Good Muslim and Bad Muslims. It has not helped to curb terrorism rather fuel it. This categorization by the US policymakers has provided the terrorists a cause and association among the Muslims. Mamdani quotes different many examples that prove that hundreds of Muslims from the world traveled to Iraq to fight against the *pagan* US army after this categorization. He stresses upon the policymakers to stop seeing Islam through the cultural lens as it has many cultures and modes of government in different parts of the world like monarchies in the Middle East and democracies in the south and central Asia. The policymakers should understand that Islam is a global religion like Christianity. The governments are not religious entities but political. If the US wants to win the war over terrorism, it has to defeat terrorists as terrorists and not as religious flag bearers. Mertus and Sajjad agree with Mamdani and they prolong this discussion saying that the US has contributed to the exploitation of people under this so-called *War on Terror*  (Mamdani, Mahmood. P.p. 766-775).

Contemporary news articles also acknowledge that the US foreign policy is still flawed and it is not like it used to be. [Tom O’Connor](https://www.newsweek.com/authors/tom-oconnor) and [James Laporta](https://www.newsweek.com/authors/james-laporta)’s article was published on Newsweek on November 15, 2019. This article is a precise but comprehensive commentary on how the US adopted a wrong policy to deal with the issue of Syria that itself was created by one previous flawed policy of the USA. The author(s) quote Moscow-based PIR Center President Evgeny Buzhinskiy who said: “I'm sorry to say, but history has proven that all U.S. interferences of late led only to disaster—no new democracy, no new prosperity, no new nothing except violence, refugees, victims and so forth, Libya, Iraq and even Yugoslavia after the U.S. bombing" have failed to become zones "of peace and prosperity” ( ….. ). A famous journal Foreign Affairs also published an article co-authored by [Paul K. MacDonald](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/authors/paul-k-macdonald) and [Joseph M. Parent](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/authors/joseph-m-parent) on December 3, 2019. This article discusses how the Bush Junior administration has engaged America in a war against an invisible enemy. An enemy who is adored by the locals and who never appears with its full power potential. This is the reason that every president after Bush promised and wished to end that the longest war of US history but they are unable to do so to date. Both articles appear as the latest explanation of the articles that we discussed above.

Kaufman has also written an interesting account of US foreign policy, and I have learned a lot from his book. Chapter 8 of the book concludes the arguments of the whole book. This chapter reviews the US foreign policy since the US claimed its status as a world Superpower (Dudziak, Mary. P.p. 32-42). He argues that it was easier for the US to sustain its status of “Hard Power” or whatever policy it adopts in the past, but the current century started with major blows to the US foreign policy. For example, 9/11 almost radicalized the US foreign policy, and Brexit is expected to bring one more major change in its policy as its key-partner would leave the European Union. Kaufman concludes that the US foreign policy has entered the age of uncertainty and it would always be affected by big changes in the global scenario.

**Conclusion**

The US foreign policy is still the most significant foreign policy that a single country possesses. The US played perhaps the most positive role during the Great Wars, but it started taking minor wrong steps when the world became bipolar. Even this was endurable for the global community, but the changes that occurred in it after Cold War have stirred the world community that almost every scholar finds it as a flawed foreign policy in the contemporary context. All the five research articles and two news articles that have been reviewed above have reached a consensus that the current US foreign policy is not reliable, neither for Americans nor for foreigners. Kaufman also claims that a foreign policy that always had a principled stance earlier has become too uncertain and flexible that no one can predict where it would go next.

**Works Cited**

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